

CLAIMS

The invention claimed is

1. A method comprising:

accepting a reservation for rental of a self-contained in-flight entertainment device for use on a commercial airline flight of an aircraft;

adding the reservation to a manifest containing at least a count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight;

comparing the count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight with a default number indicating how many in-flight entertainment devices are stored on board the aircraft; and

if the count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight is larger than the default number by a difference, then bringing on board the aircraft before the commercial airline flight commences an additional number of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices at least as large as the difference.

2. The method of claim 1 further including delivering the manifest to the aircraft before the commercial airline flight commences.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the reserving further includes reserving a commercial airline flight.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the bringing is done by a catering service for the commercial airline flight wherein a supply truck delivers the additional number of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices to the aircraft.

5. A method comprising:

reserving for rental of one of a plurality of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices for use on a commercial airline flight of an aircraft;

receiving a voucher associated with the reserving;

exchanging the voucher for one of the plurality of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices;

using the self-contained in-flight entertainment device while flying on the commercial airline flight; and

exchanging the self-contained in-flight entertainment devices for a return acknowledgement.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein with the exchanging an electronic document or a paper document is used for the return acknowledgement.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein the receiving the voucher includes an electronic document or a paper document.

8. A method comprising:

accepting a reservation for rental of a self-contained in-flight entertainment devices for use by a person on a commercial airline flight of an aircraft; and

determining if any number of a plurality of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices stored on board the aircraft require deletion of stored audiovisual presentations and addition of other audiovisual presentations and if so, delivering a quantity of the other self-contained in-flight entertainment devices having the other audiovisual presentations stored to the aircraft for exchange with the any number of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices requiring deletion of store audiovisual presentations.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the delivering is done by a catering service with a supply truck dockable with the aircraft.

10. A method comprising:

accepting a reservation for rental of a self-contained in-flight entertainment device for use on a commercial airline flight of an aircraft;

adding the reservation to a manifest containing at least a count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight;

comparing the count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight with a default number indicating how many in-flight entertainment devices are kept at a pickup location near origination of the commercial airline flight; and

if the count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight is larger than the default number by a difference, then bringing to the pickup location before the commercial airline flight commences an additional number of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices at least as large as the difference.

11. A method comprising:

accepting a reservation for rental of a self-contained in-flight entertainment device for use on a commercial airline flight of an aircraft;

adding the reservation to a manifest containing at least a count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight;

comparing the count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight with a default number indicating how many in-flight entertainment devices are stored on board the aircraft; and

if the count of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices reserved for the commercial airline flight is larger than the default number by a difference, then bringing on board the aircraft before the commercial airline flight commences an

additional number of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices at least as large as the difference.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the pickup location is inside of a high security area.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the pickup location is a kiosk counter or a gate counter.

14. The method of claim 11 wherein the pickup location is a counter of a rental car agency.

15. A method comprising:

determining if any number of a plurality of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices stored at a pickup location require deletion of stored audiovisual presentations and addition of other audiovisual presentations and if so, delivering a quantity of the other self-contained in-flight entertainment devices having the other audiovisual presentations stored to the pickup location for exchange with the any number of self-contained in-flight entertainment devices requiring deletion of store audiovisual presentations;

accepting payment and credential information at the pickup location in exchange for rental of a self-contained in-flight entertainment device for use on a commercial airline flight of an aircraft;

receiving the self-contained in-flight entertainment device at a drop-off location after the commercial airline flight in exchange for a return acknowledgement.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the pickup and drop-off location is onboard the aircraft.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein the pickup and drop-off locations are at gate counters of origination and destination airports, respectively, of the commercial airline flight.